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Features Fiction

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The Mysterious Ways of Wang Foo By Sidney C. Partridge

THE JADE-STONE PENDANT.

"CAPTAIN," said the inspector, as he rose from his office chair and, turning toward the long open window, gazed out over the blue waters of the harbor, "we might just as well give it up. It is the most puzzling case I have ever had since I came to the far east, just seventeen years ago this month."

And Inspector Wallace of the Hong-kong police, reaching up to a little Chinese ebony shelf upon the wall, took from it a long Manila cheroot and, slowly and thoughtfully lighting it, watched the Peninsular mail steamer, maneuvering toward her anchorage amid the forest of ship-ping.

"Yes, it certainly is a deep one," answered Capt. Brownlow, second in command, and, like his chief, a veteran of the Indian army. "We certainly have made a very thorough search. Every dive of stolen goods and every pawnshop in the colony has been combed, but there isn't the faintest trace of it. And here," pointing to a file of letters upon the desk, "there are the confidential reports from the vice consuls at Canton and Macao. They say they have done their best, but they are just as much in the dark as we are. There's only one thing left, sir; we'll have to send for Wang Foo."

"You are right, captain. It takes a Chinaman to catch a Chinaman, as the old saying goes. Look him up and meet me here at 9 tonight sharp. I am dining on the flag ship and will excuse myself early."

While the foregoing conversation was taking place in the police inspector's private office Lady Evington, wife of the governor of the colony, was just bidding good-bye to the wife and the daughter of the admiral at Government House.

"Yes, I have about made up my mind that I shall never see it again," she said. "The inspector told the governor this afternoon that he considered it practically a hopeless case."

"And you are quite positive that it wasn't stolen at the reception?" asked one of the women.

"Quite positive," answered Lady Evington. "I remember distinctly looking at it and admiring its rich green color just before I laid it away in the case on my dressing table, after the last visitor had gone. And," she added, with a great deal of emphasis, "I know one of the servants could not possibly have taken it, for my door was securely locked and bolted."

The article in question, that had so mysteriously disappeared from Lady Evington's dressing table two weeks before, was nothing less than the famous jade-stone pendant that the viceroy of Canton had presented to the Governor of Hongkong in recognition of his excellency's services in conducting the campaign for the relief of the thousands of sufferers from the great Pearl river flood. It was a wonderful jewel, of almost priceless value, and had for no end of years been part of the official insignia of the viceroys of Canton, hanging from the center of a necklace of coral, over the gold-embroidered phoenix on the ceremonial robes.

The gift had been elaborately described in the English papers of Hong-kong, and the notices had been translated into all the native papers of the colony and of Shanghai, and it was generally recognized that no more striking token of appreciation had ever been presented by a Chinese high official to a foreign ruler.

His excellency, Sir Arthur Wayne-Evington, the governor, had kept it securely locked in his office safe until the evening of the reception to the officers of the army and navy, when Lady Evington wore it for the first time in public. She had laid it on her dressing table just before retiring, and in the morning it had mysteriously vanished. That was all she knew. And that was all that any one knew, although the entire official staff of attendants and servants had been most rigorously examined and cross-questioned. And so "The Theft of the Viceroy's Jade-Stone," as the heading in the papers ran, became the subject of gossip and speculation all up and down the eastern coast, from Singapore to Peking.

Capt. Brownlow returned to his home after the interview, and summoning his faithful servant, Ah Sing, said:

"You save Wang Foo, go catchee four piecee chair-coolie, my wantchee go his house very chop-chop."

"You wantchee him catchee thiefman?" asked the ever-inquisitive Ah Sing.

"Never you mind what my wantchee," replied the captain, passing from his pidgin English into the more regular tongue of his mother country. "Get the chair ready quick, and mind you don't tell any one where we are going."

The light open-work sedan was got ready in a very few minutes and swinging on the shoulders of four stalwart coolies. The captain, followed by the faithful Ah Sing with a lantern, passed rapidly down Queen's road until they reached the avenue of fragrant waters, and turning to the left began the steep ascent of the alley of the Red Cloud, stopping at last in front of a little doorway that bore the thrice interwoven symbol of "5-5-5," the Chinese emblem of good luck.

The coolies quickly put down the



There was a loud cry and commotion in the outer passage way "A thief, a thief, into the river with him!"

chair and, pulling their bamboo pipes from their girdles, sat down to smoke around the lantern of Ah Sing, while the captain knocked at the door and was immediately admitted.

"Good evening, grandma," he said, with a smile, to the venerable figure who drew back the double bars, for some missionary had told him that that was always a polite form of address to any Chinese dame who had reached the age of fifty. "Is Wang Foo at home?"

"The lord of our humble mansion is waiting to receive you," was the answer, as she ushered him into the little reception room and hastened to get ready the water-pipe and the inevitable bowl of scalding green tea. The officer took the proffered chair, and soon a footstep was heard descending the narrow stairs that led into the upper loft, where the humble citizens of Hong-kong spend the sweet hours of night.

Wang Foo, the man of mystery, stood before him.

Tall and slender and light of weight, clad in a long blue gown of delicate blue silk with an upper jacket of the lightest yellow, neatly braided cue with a tassel of white (indicating mourning for a parent), the host had all the dress and manner of the perfect Chinese gentleman. His face was the traditional oval, nose rather sharper than usual among his countrymen, while the high cheek bones would have located him in the northern rather than in the southern provinces. His skin was as smooth as a child's, except on

the forehead, where it bore traces of an ugly wound received many years before in an accident. But the eyes—these were what attracted the captain's attention, as they did that of every one who ever talked with him. Narrow and slightly almond-turned at the outer edge, they were as piercing as an eagle's, and seemed—almost chameleon-like—to change their color with every changing glance. No one could have told their exact color, even in the strongest sunlight. And the hands (he put out one of them to grasp the captain's) were as long and slender as those of the fairy princess in the Chinese tales of childhood, with tapering nails of the most delicate coral pink. He would have been an interesting character study at any time or in any place; he was doubly so now.

"Good evening, captain," he said,

with a most gracious smile of welcome, before the English officer had had time to say a word. "I am highly honored to have you under my very humble roof. Please take a seat and let me know how I may have the pleasure of serving you. You surely haven't come to consult me about the robbery at government house, have you?"

"That's just it," replied the captain. "We may as well confess it, we're in a fix, and you seem to be the only one that can help us out."

"Did the inspector himself send you for me?" inquired Wang.

"He did, sir, and he is anxious to see you about it. Of course, you know about the case?"

"I have read about it in the English papers," was the brief and characteristic answer.

At this point grandma suddenly appeared with the Chinese brass pipe, which she placed before them on the table, with two bowls of smoking Foo Chow tea and a little tray containing some cigarettes for the use of the foreigner not accustomed to the native pipe. The host politely passed them to his guest, and after a few minutes' conversation on the weather and the ordinary topics of the day, the captain arose to leave.

"At what hour, Mr. Wang, may I tell the inspector to await you?"

"Say to him, with my very best compliments, that he may look for me at precisely 9 o'clock tomorrow morning."

"At his office, I suppose?"

"Yes, at his office."

"Good-night."

"Good-night, sir, and, as the Chinese say, may lucky stars guide you on your way!"

As the captain rode along Queen's road on his way home he kept saying to himself:

"Wonderful man, that Wang. No doubt, he knows all about his countrymen and their tricky ways, but when did he get that smooth and polished English? Not a syllable of 'pidgin' the whole time I was there. Why, he speaks as correctly as an English schoolmarm."

He did not know that Wang had learned his first English from the bishop's own daughter in the old mission on the Bund, and polished and refined it afterward by a two-year residence in Melbourne. Long and faithful study had made him a master of it, as he was of his own ancestral tongue and its complicated literature.

"Venerable grand one," he said, addressing the old lady, who had bolted the door after the departure of the foreigner, "where is old Chang?"

"He is resting in the outer court."

"Call him at once, and tell him to go to the Temple of the Queen of Heaven and ask for the abbot, and say that Wang Foo desires the honor of his presence without delay."

"It is done as the master says."

In scarcely twenty minutes' time the old abbot arrived, and after the tea and pipes they ascended the rickety stairs to the upper loft.

"Welcome, venerable father, to the humble shrine of Choo-Foo-Tse," said Wang Foo as they entered and took seats in the little study.

"I am honored beyond words in being admitted to the shrine that bears the name of the greatest scholar of the classics," replied the guest.

For two long hours they were closeted together, and the results of their consultations amounted to this: It was not likely that any Chinese official, even of the rank of viceroy, would knowingly give to a European a jewel of such value and such national pride as the famous jade-stone pendant of the dynasty of the Tsings. Therefore, on first thought, what the governor received must have been a cheap duplicate or an imitation, trusting that the European eye would never detect the difference. But no Chinese thief would ever be able to dispose of such a treasure without being instantly apprehended. Therefore, on second thought, the only conclusion was that the viceroy actually did present the genuine pendant to the governor, and then privately arranged for it to be stolen and brought back to him.

The guilty party, whoever he might be, must be sought in the viceregal yamen at Canton. But it must be done with the utmost secrecy, for the exposure of an official of high rank would mean almost certain death to the informer. An immediate trip to Canton and an entree into the inner yamen must be the very first step in tracing the criminal.

"You are quite sure, venerable father," he said to the old ecclesiastic on leaving, "that your description of the jewel is correct?"

"Quite positive," was the answer. "See! Here it is as I copied it today from one of our rarest volumes in the temple library, entitled 'Jewels of the Imperial Line and Sacred Possessions of the Sons of Heaven.' No. 28—The jade-stone pendant, or seal of the Tsing emperors. The most perfect stone ever brought from the imperial jade-stone mines of Shen Si. It measures two inches in length by an inch and three-quarters in width and depth. It is of the clearest green, pure as the waters of the sacred sea. On it are carved the words of the motto of the great Tsings, 'Pure as this stone must ever be the imperial heart.' But that which gives it its priceless value and marks it as the very gift of high heaven to the celestial line is this: That when held up to the direct light of the sun the crystal markings in its center outline the character for 'Tsing' or 'Pure.' There is and can be no other like it in the world."

"It is enough," said Wang Foo. "We are pledged to eternal secrecy?"

"By the oath of the Elder Brotherhood that is never broken," responded

(Continued on Ninth Page.)

Flaming Tank Led the Americans Into Varennes

BY GEORGE H. SELDE.
WITH THE 1ST AMERICAN
ARMY, WEST OF VERDUN,
November 7, 1918.

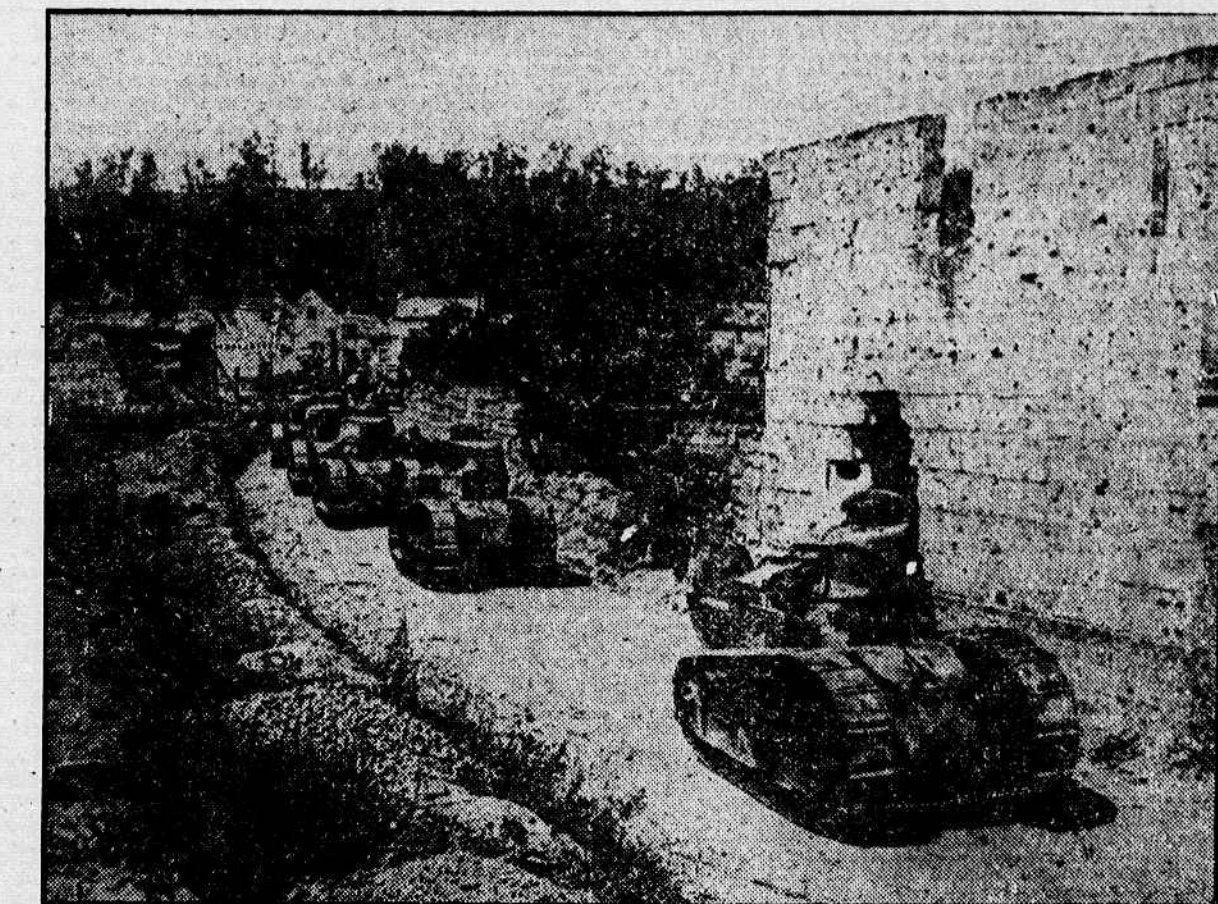
It was a pillar of flame by day that led the Pennsylvania, Missouri and Kansas men into Varennes. At the zero hour, 5.30, when the infantry went over on the first day of the attack, the tanks "jumped off" also and at first were outdistanced by the doughboys. Later, when German shell fire, and especially machine bullets, increased, and the advance had to be made more cautiously, the French-built American-style Renault tanks came up abreast with the first wave and sheltered the infantry.

Varennes itself was a rabbit warren of machine gun nests. Boys from Pittsburgh, Greensburg and Philadelphia flanked it from one side and St. Louis lads from the other. The tanks made a frontal attack. It was in this operation that the pillar of fire lighted the way. It was a tank on fire.

At first it was a flicker, but soon it rose into a mad blaze, a crazy blaze, for it never stopped moving. It dodged and ducked, it slipped, it turned to a side, wallowed like a drunken thing, but it continued to move forward. That is why it was such a wonderful thing. It led a flaming way into the first objective.

In the tank was Lieut. Harry Mayne, a young officer of the New Jersey contingent of tank drivers. It was he who stayed in his steel cage while the gasoline tanks strapped on the tail of his vehicle went into flame and explosions, and it was he who entered Varennes and shot up the German nests. His brave example encouraged the infantry and made him a hero among his own tank corps men. His command officer, Capt. Ranulf Compton of New York city, has sent this incident in his official report and recommendations.

One other of the ninety-six tanks which were in action that day took fire—that is, the gasoline tanks strapped on the outside burned up, the tank itself having withstood enemy bullets, steel and incendiary. This tank was operated by Corp. Clarence Sutton of Boston, who had a turn first as driver, then as gunner. The corporal was standing beside his blackened but otherwise unharmed tank in one of the villages he had helped capture,



A LINE OF "BABY" TANKS JUST BACK OF THE FIRING LINE IN FRANCE.

(French official photograph. Supplied by International Film Service.)

when I met him yesterday. This is his story:

"We had to wait for the mist to lift after we had gone the first two kilometers," he said, "because it was impossible to see anything through the slits in the door or even through the telescopic glass on the gun. We knew there were tank traps all along the way and had to be cautious."

"We got into the Varennes and found ourselves under heavy fire. It was the first time we had been attacked by those German anti-tank guns and we could sometimes hear the large bullets strike and go part way into the tanks. But we didn't mind that."

"Sergeant Dietz and I had exchanged places and I was the gunner in the

latter part of the excursion. There were three large bidons (cans) of gasoline outside the tank just back of me which we had placed there because we expected to go a long way and knew that a supply of petrol would not be obtainable once we got ahead of the trucks."

"In the middle of the attack, when the bullets from the German machine and special guns were getting thicker, I felt myself getting very hot in the back. A tank is by no means a refrigerator car, you understand, but this heat was intolerable. So I suspected and swung my turret around to the rear. Flames came in through the eye slits."

"I turned the turret back and kicked Dietz. The engine was making so

much noise he could not hear me, so I got down to his ear and shouted, 'I think we're on fire.'

"What shall we do?" he asked.

"Beat it and take a chance with the doughboys," I answered.

"So we beat it. Dietz got out from the front door and I followed him that way because my exit from the cupola was wreathed in fire. We found ourselves in Varennes almost alone. Fortunately there were other tanks in other parts of the town and the infantry on both sides, so the Germans could not have captured our tank. Besides, I do not think they had the time just then to wait for the fire to go out."

"The first thing that happened was the appearance of a German soldier,

who ran toward us with his hands in the air and the well known 'Kamerad' cry. He was crying, scared, actually blubbering. I accepted his surrender and motioned for him to come over. He came up very close, drying his tears on his sleeves, and when he got within a few feet of me he looked close and saw that I didn't have a thing in my hands. In the exit from the tank we had left our automatics and daggers behind.

"So the crying German drew his automatic and fired point blank at me."

"I jumped at him when I saw him go for his gun, and his shot went wild. We grappled. We fell together and rolled over and punched each other, and I got the gun away from him. He had a trench knife in his belt. I got that out of its sheath and got myself loose from his grip. I lifted the knife to kill him and was bringing my hand down when something stopped it. It was my sergeant who had come up to help me. We took that crying German prisoner."

Other tank officers, non-coms and men who had their initiation in the battle of St. Mihiel did valorous work in this hard fight. Capt. Harry H. Semmes of Washington, D. C.; Lieut. H. E. Gibbs of Canton, Ohio; Capt. Compton, Sergt. Earl Patterson of Indianapolis, Lieut. Walter Ratfray of Bangor, Me., and Lieut. Gordon Grant of New Rochelle, N. Y., got into very heavy attacks and counter barrages and fought through mined fields and traps. In one instance these tanks passed a deadly trap which would have destroyed a heavier tank than the Renault. Our engineers afterward removed the mine.

Our tank corps began to employ pigeons for sending messages of progress or of German concentrations encountered. One of the birds reached its cot with the following message: "Can't find opposition. Tired of holding pigeon."

The United States tanks are now organized as follows: Five to a platoon and three platoons to a company, with one tank for the commander, making sixteen in a company. Three or four companies form a battalion and three or four battalions form a brigade. With each tank there are liaison men outside, brave fellows who volunteer for a task which takes them far beyond the first attacking wave sometimes, and through barrages whenever it is necessary to send word from one tank to another. They are the only men in the service whom I have heard praised by the American doughboy.

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The Mysterious Ways of Wang Foo

(Continued From First Page.)

the abbot, as he passed out into the darkness. At precisely 9 o'clock on the following morning Wang Foo was announced at the inspector's office, and was immediately ushered into the inner room, where, after a most cordial greeting and a friendly chertout, the following terse conversation took place between him and the English officer:

"I have sent for you, Mr. Wang, because I believe you are the only person that can unravel this mystery for us, if there is really any unraveling to it. I remember the wonderful way in which you cleared up the matter of the Hongkong bank robbery last year, and every one has heard of your help in tracing the harbor pirates to their dens and in convicting the Kow Loon murderers. You certainly understand these people better than we do. So we want you to find the thief that took Lady Evington's pendant."

"I need hardly say that it will be a pleasure and a privilege to serve his excellency the governor in any way or at any time," replied Wang, "and I take a special interest in this case because it concerns him and Lady Evington personally. First, let me ask, have you made a thorough examination of the premises and questioned her ladyship directly? Tell me the whole story, slowly and with every detail."

The inspector sat down and, beginning with the ceremonies of the presentation of the jewel, gave his Chinese visitor all the facts that the police under him had been able to collect. Wang listened very attentively, making now and then a note or two in a red leather case which he drew out of the copious sleeve of his jacket. His only interruption was an occasional, "Yes, I know all that; please proceed quickly," spoken in a nervous and jerking way. When the inspector had finished he rose and said:

"It will hardly be necessary for me to call at Government house and make a personal examination of Lady Evington's apartment. We Chinese do not usually trace crime in that way. But out of compliment to their excellencies and because they might otherwise question my thoroughness, I think I had better go. Kindly send an officer ahead of us and ask if we can have the honor of an interview in half an hour."

The officer returned in a very few minutes, and, accompanied by the inspector, our Chinese prince of detectives, for such he was, visited Government house and heard from the governor and Lady Evington in person the story of the robbery, and visited under their guidance the apartment from which the pendant had so mysteriously disappeared. On bidding them farewell, he bowed respectfully and said:

"This is the first of the new month; I ask just fifteen days to look into the matter thoroughly. Whatever happens, you will see me or hear from me on the morning of the 13th, the feast day of the yellow dragon."

Wang Foo reached his home, and after the morning rice said to his faithful housekeeper:

"Venerable Grand One, I go away for a few days. Keep everything quiet and in order until my return. And to the honorable visitors what shall the answer be?"

"The master is gone to the Quiet Glade for study and reflection."

"It is done as the master says."

He ascended the steep little staircase to the upper room and, locking the door, made the following preparations: He took from under the bedstead the little white pigskin trunk—faithful companion of every Chinese traveler—and, disrobing himself entirely, laid all his garments carefully in it. From the bookshelf he took a few ancient volumes—"The Analects of Confucius," the "Doctrine of the Mean," "Book of Rites and Ceremonies" and a little copy of "Seals and Carvings of the Ancient Empire"—and tucked them carefully away underneath the clothing. Then from a drawer in his desk he drew a bundle of long strips of red paper, visiting cards of assorted ranks, and laid them with the books. To these he added his water-pipe of cloisonne, a package of native tobacco and a few necessary articles for his daily toilet. Last of all he opened a little lacquer cabinet, and, drawing from it three octagon tin boxes, examined them carefully (they were marked "light," "medium" and "strong"), and, wrapping them carefully in a sheet of yellow paper, put them in the top of the pigskin trunk and closed and securely locked it.

Wang Foo, as we know him, did not reappear. But a half hour later a Singapore rice merchant, clad in the dark-brown garments of the southern provinces, and followed by a coolie with a pigskin trunk and a roll of bedding on either end of a bamboo, passed rapidly down the Avenue of Fragrant Waters and joined the long line of passengers ascending the gangway of the afternoon steamer for the city of Canton. He found a vacant spot on the upper deck, and was waiting patiently for the final whistle of departure when he saw the familiar form of old Chang passing hurriedly by and apparently looking anxiously for his master. He hailed him:

"How did you know I was here?"

"The bamboo carrier told me he had brought a gentleman from our alley, and I wanted you to receive this letter, which came just after you had left."

"It is well. Here is the wine money. Return at once, and let your words be few."

As the great steamer (she was a Hudson river boat years ago, that had weathered the cape) pushed her way out through the deep waters of the harbor, the rice merchant tore open the envelope and revealed a tiny slip of red paper with these words:

At Canton look out carefully for the viceroys second secretary. His real name is Fong, but he is known everywhere as the "Black Fox." He is dangerous to others, but he may be valuable to you.

Underneath was the seal of the old abbot. He read it over carefully again and, repeating the words, "Black Fox," "Black Fox," he tore it into a hundred fragments and tossed them into the foaming wake of the steamer.

Arriving at the great teeming city, the rice merchant, traveling under the name of Woo, engaged an upper room at the "Inn of Heavenly Welcome," and proceeded to unroll the matting roll of bedding and to make himself at home. It was a very warm evening, and he enjoyed sitting by the open window and breathing the cool air from the great Pearl River. The

room between him and the adjoining room was very thin and the boards so cracked that any conversation could be overheard by him without any effort at eavesdropping.

As he sipped his bowl of fragrant tea and tasted the little slices of preserved ginger which the servant had placed upon his table, he became suddenly conscious of a heated argument which was going on in the adjoining apartment. This was what he heard:

"I tell you, there isn't a greater villain in the entire Yamen, and he has his excellency the viceroys completely in his power. He even uses his seals and his private keys. I tell you, 'Black Fox' is the curse of Canton, and the city will never prosper till it is rid of him."

"Yes," said another voice, "I have even heard that he is suspected of having stolen the jade-stone seal of the Tsings, and that the viceroys were a clever imitation in its place."

The entrance of a servant with the evening meal ended the conversation abruptly here, but Woo, the rice merchant, had overheard enough to set him in a train of careful reflection, and he passed the night in thinking and planning.

Early the following morning he set out for the Street of the Seal Cutters, and, sauntering leisurely along, he entered a shop where an engraver was hard at work at his little bench.

"Pray tell me," he said to the workman, "who is it that carves the seals for the officials of the Yamen?"

"Old Chow Foo, at the sign of the Jade-stone Temple," was the answer. "Has had that monopoly for many years."

Woo thanked him and walked along the crowded street until his eye caught the sign of the official engraver. He entered and asked to see the master of the shop. An aged workman, with large crystal goggles inclosed in rims of horn, came forward to meet him.

"I wish to speak to you on a matter of important private business," he said.

The master took him into an inner chamber and carefully closed the door. They waited a moment until the servant that had brought the tea bowls retired, and then Woo began: "What did the Black Fox pay you for carving that imitation seal of the Tsings?"

The master carver turned pale and stammered. "Black Fox—seal of the Tsings?—I do not understand you, sir!"

Woo leaned toward him over the teapot, and, seizing him by the wrist with a grasp of steel, held him like a vise while he said, piercing him through and through with eyes of fire:

"Do not attempt to deny it, or your head will roll on the ground when his excellency hears of it. You know well the penalty for forging an imperial seal."

The seal-cutter winced, and, trembling for his life, confessed to him. The Black Fox had come to him in the dead secrecy of night and paid him two hundred Mexican dollars for duplicating the seal of the Tsings, and threatened him with instant death if he ever divulged it.

Woo relaxed his hold and the old seal-cutter sank down into his seat. "That is all I wished to know," said the visitor as he rose to depart. "Cease your trembling. You are safe, on one condition that you let no mortal man ever know of this story."

view has taken place between us."

With that he unbarred the door of the inner room and in a moment was lost to sight in the crowded street.

The following morning Woo sat in the gatekeeper's lodge of the viceregal Yamen.

"Does the second secretary accompany his excellency to the Imperial customs today?" he asked of the old gatekeeper, as he slipped a Mexican into his palm. "I am a visitor to the city and am most anxious to see him."

"He passes out in an hour's time," was the reply. "Sit here and enjoy your pipe and you shall see him."

Woo sipped the proffered tea and waited patiently for the official procession to pass. Ere long he heard the shouts of the out-runners and the victors, and soon he saw the outlines of the viceregal sedan chair. He took a position of special vantage, and in the second sedan chair he saw the object of his search. There was no mistaking the Black Fox; he would know him anywhere on earth, and in almost any disguise. His excellency the viceroys wore the coral necklace of his office, but without the usual pendant, for the original was concealed in the inner robes of the secretary, while the imitation, had been, all unconscious of the deceit, presented by his excellency to the governor of Hongkong.

The secretary is leaving on the morrow to visit his parents in the province of Four Rivers," volunteered the gatekeeper, as Woo rose to leave. "As the family is in deep mourning, he goes secretly, in a citizen's blue gown."

The down river steamer for Hongkong was loading at the customs wharf, getting ready to depart at sundown. All day long, from early dawn, a traveler with a pigskin trunk and a roll of bedding had sat at the side of the gangway. He was apparently lost in the pages of a historical novel; in reality he was scanning intently every passenger who bought a ticket. Hour after hour he sat there, when at last his efforts were rewarded. A plainly clad gentleman purchased a ticket and was assigned to cabin No. 32. Instantly the watcher followed him and secured the other berth in the cabin.

Woo waited until his companion was ready to retire, and then courteously offered him a pipeful of tobacco, which was readily accepted. It came out of the little tin box marked "strong." The effect began to show itself at once, and his companion fell into a deep and heavy slumber.

Quick as a flash Woo was upon him and the long hands were searching the folds of his capacious sleeves. In an inner pocket, carefully sewed up, he felt a hard, square lump. Sharply pointed scissors soon cut it loose, and out of a silken wrapper rolled the seal of the Tsings!

Almost at the same instant there was a loud cry and commotion in the outer passageway, and Woo heard the ominous shrieks, "Chang, Tao, Tsai Sui, Tsai Sui!" ("A thief, a thief! Into the river with him!") He knew only too well the swift and stern justice which Chinese passengers administered to those who were caught robbing them. He opened his cabin door just as they were dragging their victim by. "Not into the river," he cried; "throw him in here, and we will lock him up until the morning!"

The crowd yielded for a moment, and he dragged the swooning wretch into the cabin. He bolted the door, and it was but the work of a few rapid moments to pull off the thief's ragged garments and substitute the blue gown of the secretary, and then to drag the dragged officer to the floor and shove him into the cotton mattress

of the river pirate. The crowd outside grew restless.

"Bring him out!" they screamed. "Into the river with him!"

They started to break in the door. Woo opened it, and ere he could restrain them they had dragged the helpless form to the deck, and with a loud cry of vengeance had thrown him into the swirling waters of the river.

It was the 13th day of the moon and the feast day of the Yellow Dragon, and Wang Foo and Inspector Wallace were ushered into the private office of Government House. His excellency and Lady Evington greeted them most cordially.

"Well, Mr. Wang," said the governor, "we are waiting anxiously to hear the results of your labors. We hope you have good news for us."

"Your excellency," said Wang Foo, "as he rose and drew from his left sleeve a tiny packet. 'I have the very great pleasure of now returning to you and to her ladyship the jade-stone pendant stolen from Government House.'"

"Wonderful!" cried Lady Evington. "Wonderful beyond words! How can we express our gratitude to you?" And she took once more the jewel into her hands and admired it.

The governor opened a secret drawer in his desk and drew out a roll of Bank of England notes. "What reward do you think suitable for your services, Mr. Wang?"

"I accept no rewards, as you know," the detective replied. "My expenses are privately provided for; but if you have a vacant position in your office, for a young interpreter, I should like to recommend my nephew."

"He shall begin his duties in the morning. And now let me ask you who was the thief and how are we to punish him?"

"You cannot punish him, for he is not amenable to punishment by any court of justice."

"What a strange personality!"

"Sir, he has no personality. He is not a human being at all. Lady Evington's jewel was stolen by a magpie that flew into her apartment at night, and seeing the shining object lying detached upon the dressing-table, picked it up in his beak and carried it off to the corner of the garden, where my trusty servant found it a few nights ago. We know of a number of similar robberies here in former years."

As Wang Foo reached the door at the close of this interesting denouement, he paused for a moment, and, turning to Lady Evington, said with the most gracious of bows:

"Before I leave, there is still greater pleasure in store for me. And drawing from his other sleeve a similar packet he exclaimed to the astonished listeners: 'Permit me now to hand to your ladyship the priceless jewel of my country. Here is the real jade-stone seal of the Tsings. What you formerly had, and what his excellency the viceroys presented to you in good faith, was only an imitation. The original was stolen by an attache in his Yamen and the duplicate substituted for it. It has now been recovered, and I ask you to accept it at my hands. But, and here he smiled, 'I must not leave detached jewels lying around on your dressing table at night, when the weather is warm and the windows are open. It might lead you to suspect a perfectly innocent servant. Men are not the only thieves in nature.'"

"Venerable Grand One," said the prince of Chinese detectives, "the ten has grown a little cold. Fill up the bowl again, and hand me the pipe of pleasure."

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